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fighting capacity of the population. It need not be stated that the Prussian state militant is the author's ideal.

An exhaustive bibliography on population comprising nearly a hundred pages begun by Dr. Frankenstein and completed by the learned and industrious Dr. Lippert of the Prussian Statistical Bureau, gives the book great value and insures its reception into every well appointed statistical library.

I wish that I could speak of the text with equal commendation. But the author is hopelessly heavy. Never sprightly at its best, in the hands of a mere literary workman who has not the slightest trace of the artist, statistics is a profoundly soporific subject. This can perhaps be forgiven when the bookmaker furnishes us a handy-reference volume. But the present author has locked his treasures of information in a box and thrown away the key. The book has no index while its arrangement and table of contents is sadly lacking in that most amiable of German characteristics, *Uebersichtlichkeit*.

ROLAND P. FALKNER.

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*Ouvriers du temps passé* (xv, xvi siècles). Par H. HAUSER, Professeur à la faculté des lettres de l'université de Clermont-Ferrand. Pp. xxxviii, 252. Price 6 fr. Paris: Felix Alcan, 1898.

This work is not a history, but a picture of the conditions prevailing during that interesting period of the industrial history of France extending from the middle of the fifteenth to the latter part of the sixteenth centuries. The study might properly have been entitled "the labor problem during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries." In successive chapters the author treats of the organization of labor, the state regulation of trade, apprenticeship, journeymen, the labor contract, labor organizations, wages, employment of women, strikes, and poor relief. The essential features of the labor problem in the past have been clearly and succinctly presented.

The impression we gain from reading this work is that the problems of industrial organization and labor were scarcely less important then than now. Just as during recent years a struggle has been going on between the principles of state action and regulation, and what is called individualism, so the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries were characterized by an equally acute contest between the system of free cities where the prosecution of a trade was untrammelled by legal restriction, and that of *villes jurées*, where each trade was organized into a sort of close corporation. Competition on the part of persons outside of this body or by other cities was restricted in every possible way. The guilds of each city thus not only sought to prevent the use

of goods made outside of the city, but strove to restrict the number of their members as far as possible. To do this the requirements of apprenticeship, the making of a masterpiece, of entrance fees to the guilds, etc., were constantly made more rigid. The tendency was to form a small caste of employers into which entrance was impossible for the great mass of workmen. The labor movement of the period revealed itself in the struggle of the workmen against this effort and for greater freedom and opportunity.

As this is the most significant feature of the period under discussion, it is important to note that Professor Hauser takes issue with the opinion generally held that *villes jurés* were the rule and free cities the exception. The condition of affairs, he holds, was quite the reverse. The mistake of earlier writers arose from the fact that they investigated conditions in cities in which the records were easily accessible, and these cities were those most directly under the authority of the French throne. Industrial liberty, the right of the individual freely to engage in any trade as desired, was thus, he says, far more prevalent than we have been led to believe was the case.

Another belief which the author claims must be materially modified, to accord with the facts, is that concerning the journey made by workingmen as the final preparation for plying their trade as independent journeymen. The tendency of certain writers to idealize the past has made of this journey a charming picture. In point of fact it was often otherwise. Then as now the weary traveler had to fight his way, endure hardship, and overcome obstacles. Whatever the advantage of such an experience, it was not always the long pleasure trip that fancy has pictured it.

Apart from the information given concerning former industrial conditions, this study of Professor Hauser merits the attention of students of economic history as an example of the proper method of historical inquiry. Former writers, of whom Professor Rogers and Vicomte d'Avenel are examples, have been led into many errors; first, by making too broad generalizations from data descriptive only of conditions in particular localities; and, secondly, in attempting to give too great precision to statements of wages and prices. In both of these respects the author has exercised great caution. The reader is constantly reminded that conditions found to exist in one section of the country did not necessarily prevail elsewhere. As regards the attempt to give exact statements of wages and prices, he shows how futile such an effort is. An average wage rate for a country where conditions vary widely in different sections is meaningless. How impossible it is to give this information for a remote period may be seen from the fact that, not

only is it difficult at the present time to determine with accuracy the value of the money in which the quotations are expressed, but often even the value of the unit of measure employed cannot be ascertained. Finally, the author has avoided the error of accepting the conditions set forth in royal orders or decrees, and other administrative acts as being those actually existing. Many of them were dead letters, and others were never enforced except in certain localities. The records of judicial proceedings furnish interesting data concerning both actual conditions and the motives underlying the action of the contending parties, and have been utilized to a considerable extent in the preparation of this work.

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WILLIAM FRANKLIN WILLOUGHBY.

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*Value and Distribution*: An Historical, Critical, and Constructive Study in Economic Theory: Adapted for Advanced and Post-Graduate Work. By CHARLES WILLIAM MACFARLANE, Ph. D. Pp. xxiii, 317. Price, \$2.50. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1899.

A review of the more important contributions of American economists to theoretical discussion within the past decade would probably recognize four central topics: Walker's theory of distribution, the Austrian theory of value, an ultimate standard of value, and the interrelation of economics and sociology. In each case it is possible to point to a single treatise or essay as the proximate cause of debate and to recognize a modified phase of economic theory as its result. With the rhythmical movement of scientific progress, a lull has succeeded this critical period. Eclecticism has become the dominant note in economic writing, and the practice rather than the theory of economic relations—the favorite subject of study and investigation. The time may thus be said to have arrived, not indeed for a final estimate, but for a critical summary of the scientific activity of a clearly defined period.

It is, however, no easy task to study with success this past decade of economic criticism. The historian closes his page with a safe generalization as to the immediate influence of the historical movement. For later developments every student is perforce his own historian. The subject-matter is a large, scattered body of monographic literature, marked by fundamental unity but revealing in its course variety of accent and distinctiveness of approach. The inquirer must possess not only detailed acquaintance with economic "systems," but must have an appreciative grasp—secured either by word of mouth or by scientific intuition—of unformulated doctrines and tentative theories.